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"Ye also, Druids, from relinquished arms
Returning, recommend your awful rites
Barbaric, and solemnities uncouth."

Although in the following extract from a juvenile production,* published some years since, there is evidently an anachronism, still it has been considered as not giving a bad idea of the unholy rites which are supposed to have been practised by the early invaders of our country.

"Soon from the shore the fleet is seen,
In warlike garb, and threatening mien,
Upon each galley's deck appears
A triple row of shields and spears.
Closed are O'Connor's peaceful halls,
Grates the portcullis as it falls,
Ten glowing summers have gone o'er
Since that hoarse shriek was heard before;
The pharos spreads the dread alarm,
And tells each neighbouring chief to arm,
From every fort and turret round
Is heard the bugle's echoing sound,

* * * * *

On Mohir's cliffs the war-touch burns,
The signal every fort returns,
Roused by the gleagh† from afar,
The neighbouring chieftains arm for war.

* * * * *

Meanwhile the foe, with anxious care,
To their dread god a cromleach rear;
On three rude crags of stone is placed
A pond'rous flag, sloped to the east;
Round this is formed in mystic rite
A circle wide of unbewn stones,
While three old Druids, robed in white,
Place here and there some human bones;
Pieces of wood around are spread,
And lighted firebrands ready laid.
At distance, borne on truss of spears,
The destined victim now appears,
Bound hand and foot—his look serene
Speaks him a warrior to have been—
A captive now—the tenth I ween.

As he is slowly borne along
The Druids raise the funeral song—
Now on the sloping cromleach laid,
Beside him rests the murderous blade.
Nine times in solemn rite, profound,
They pace the measured circle round,
Still muttering words of mystic sound!
The Archdruid gives the fatal stroke,
The victim who nor once had spoke,
With his expiring, latest breath,
Defies in scorn the men of death—
While slowly now he bleeds and dies,
Loud yells from all the squadrons rise;
The Archdruid lifts his oaken wand,
The bending squadrons silent stand;
Again the song the Druid's raise,
To celebrate great Wodin's praise:

DRUID'S SONG.

'Glorious Wodiu, god of war,
Mount thy blood-stained conquering car,
Come and drink this flowing blood,
Food delicious for a god.
Lo! the banquet now is spread,
Look! the wine is ruby red;
Mount thy chariot, lend thine aid,
Nerve the arm, and steel the blade—
Ere the morning's sun decline
Richer banquets shall be thine.
Glorious Wodin! god of war,
Mount thy blood-stained conquering car,
Come and drink this flowing blood,
Food delicious for a god.'

* "Bertha," a tale of Erin.

† A signal from the watch tower.

They cease, and all th' maddening throng
Take up the chorus of the song,
While quickly from the smoking pyre
Ascends one brilliant flame of fire,
And all around in mazy trance
The Druids lightly foot the dance."

The Scandinavians practised the superstitious rites of Gothic Paganism. They are said to have dedicated the tenth of their captives, ascertained by lot, a sacrifice to Wodin, or Odin, the god of war

SALLY M'DONNELL.

About the beginning of the last century there lived an apothecary at the entrance of a village in one of the northern counties in Ireland. His name was Stewart, and he practiced medicine and surgery very successfully.—Owing to his triple profession and economical habits, he was reputed well to pass in the world, and every year added to his wealth. The mere of his dwelling looked to some fields, and the court-yard that belonged to it was enclosed by a low wall; yet though unprotected, both from his situation and the state of his premises, Stewart had hitherto lived in security. One night he was as usual attending some of his patients, when Sally M'Donnell, his only servant, who on such occasions attended the shop and took care of the house, was preparing to go to bed as the clock had struck twelve. She knew that her master would not return till morning was advanced, and she shut the shop and bolted all the doors and windows, raked the kitchen fire, and went into a small room that opened from it, where she slept. She began to undress herself, when she heard a noise from the rear, as if some person was trying to break into the kitchen from the window; she concealed the light from her candle, and listened; the noise ceased, and was resumed at intervals, as if the persons were fearful of alarming the inhabitants; hardly knowing what she did, she seized a cleaver, and placing herself by the window waited the result in silence. The attack on the window soon recommenced—the shutter gave way—the window frame and panes of glass were broken, and two heads pushed in through the aperture.—Sally made blows at both with all her strength, and they were withdrawn; heavy groans followed, and, after a while, all remained silent. She listened anxiously, expecting another attempt, but none being made, she secured the broken window as well as she could, by placing the kitchen table upright against it and several weights, and locking the kitchen door, she repaired to the room behind the shop; here she relighted the fire, and remained till Mr. Stewart's return early in the morning. She related all that had passed, and said she feared having seriously wounded the assailants. He examined the court-yard and passage through the fields, and from the traces left, agreed in her opinion. This event caused much conversation and speculation in the hitherto peaceful village.—Some weeks rolled away, during which Stewart made every effort to discover the perpetrators of the outrage, but in vain; an impenetrable mystery seemed to hang over the transaction.

One market day a handsome young man, of genteel appearance came to the shop to have a hurt dressed in his hand. He paid liberally, and as he seemed uneasy about it, though Stewart did not consider the injury material, he desired the stranger to call whenever he came to the village, and that he would dress it. One day that the patient came, Stewart was otherwise engaged; and as Jones said he was in haste to return home, Sally was desired to attend to his hurt, and continued to do so; but as the wound in the hand healed by her judicious management, she inflicted another by her bright eyes: her patient became in love with her. Sally was pretty; and not insensible to the admiration she excited—she returned the compliment, and fell desperately in love with her engaging patient. He proposed marriage as soon as she acknowledged her partiality for him. She consented to make him happy, and wished to inform Stewart of the approaching change in her situation.

"Alas! my sweet girl," said Jones, "that would ruin me entirely; it is easy to see he never would consent, for

he intends you for himself. I have not been coming here so long without finding that out."

Sally felt that her lover had reason for his surmises; and she agreed that their marriage should be private.—Jones told her that her master would easily forgive her when it was over, and he saw the good circumstances in which Jones was.

In the north of Ireland, runaway matches were considered in a less unfavorable light than in the south. In Sally's class of life they frequently occurred; and having arranged all the necessary preliminaries with Jones, as to where they were to be married, one fine night in April she stole out, after Stewart had retired to rest, and carefully closing the hall-door, proceeded on her expedition. Jones was waiting for her, according to appointment; they then walked down the road that led from the village, and, cheered by the soft whispers of love, she recovered her spirits. He had left his horse in a ruinous house, and, leading him forth, placed Sally on him, and then mounting before her, struck into a brisk trot. After travelling for some time, she asked, had they far to go? He replied that a few miles would bring them to his friends.—He soon turned off the high road, down a lane. Sally asked why he did so.]

"I prefer this short cut, as there is less danger of pursuit; who ever heard of runaways keeping to the public road?"

The rapid rate at which they travelled prevented their conversing much, but Sally fancied that Jones's manner was changed—his answers were short and dissatisfactory; and when he laughed at her questions, it made her tremble—it was not like a human laugh. Though the moon did not shine brightly, there was sufficient light to guide them. He now entered on a common that led to the remains of a forest; the ground became rough and rocky, much encumbered with underwood, and some fine old trees were scattered through it.

"Do your friends live here?" asked Sally in surprise.

"You shall soon know."

She became alarmed, and tried to get off the horse; but Jones grasped her, and with Herculean strength whisked her before him, swearing dreadfully that if she did not keep quiet she never should reach the ground alive. He soon afterwards alighted, and led the horse, still holding her firmly. At length he stopped and whistled; she strained her eyes, but could not perceive any house. The whistle was soon answered, and a man appeared through the gloom, and took the bridle, telling Jones "that they had been waiting for him since night-fall." He took Sally off, and told her "she was *not* near the end of her journey. She begged to know where he was bringing her, and struggled to get away.

"Come, come," said he, "this is soon ended;" and taking her in his arms, he carried her down a sloping path concealed by the underwood, till a rock seemed to impede his further passage; here he let Sally down, still holding her firmly, and slipped behind the rock, dragging her after him through so narrow a passage that none but those acquainted with it, could think it led to any cave. The entrance to it was so low that Jones was obliged to enter on his hands and knees; after he had passed the narrow inlet, next they entered a tolerably sized apartment: a bog wood fire afforded light—some women were seated round it, their ferocious countenances looking still more appalling from the fitful gleam cast on them.

"Here," said Jones, bringing Sally forward, "here I have brought her to you, and a tough job I had of it, sure enough."

A yell of savage joy burst from the women, and they crowded round her exclaiming "are you come *dear*;" it is you that is welcome, *dear*; the devil will have you soon, *dear*; now you shall pay for the death of my brother, of my father, of my husband."

"Let me at her," roared one, "until I murder her in style."

"No," said another, "we must share and share alike in the job."

"Let's think how we can worry her most," shouted all together, and they devised many horrid plans that made the poor girl's heart cease to beat, and were going to seize her when Jones interposed.

"Softly, ladies—fair and softly is the word—is Mother Beldrum here?"

"No, no, noble captain, she isn't; but what of that," bawled the rest.

"Then hands off," hands off every one of you, or by —, here he swore an oath that made even the female fiends draw back. "You must stop proceedings," resumed Jones in his usual mild manner, "till the old girl comes; she must not be balked of her revenge."

"Aye, aye, that is but fair, for Judy lost her only son by the first blow this *dearie* struck."

"But," said another, "Mother Beldrum can't return till past midnight at soonest, and must we wait till then, noble captain?"

"Why, I say *you must*," said Jones, authoritatively; for Judy is not to be vexed nor cheated at no rate—a mother's claim is always first on the list—you know the rules."

Sally wept, begged, entreated Jones for mercy—reminded him of the love he had professed to lure her from her home, &c.

"Love! love!" said Jones sneeringly—"talk to me of love, indeed—do you know who *I am*?—pretty love mine is, you fool."

She hung on him, renewing her supplications for mercy. He scowled at her like a demon, and flung her from him, saying she must have as much mercy as she showed to others.

"Take her into your charge," he said to the women; "I have done my part—I have performed my promise—do you do the rest; but, *mind*, not a hair of her head shall be touched till Mother Beldrum's return; and now get me my supper, for the night air has made me in proper tune for it."

One of the women approached Sally, saying, "Come along, *dearie*."

The poor girl followed her in silent agony. They passed through a similar passage as in the entry, and, after some windings, the woman stopped, laid down a lamp, and unlocked a door, then opening it, pushed in Sally, saying, "make the best of your time, *dear*—none ever left this room but to die—we'll soon be coming for *you*." She left the lamp, then locked the door, and departed.

What had passed at first seemed to Sally as a frightful dream; but, by degrees, her fortitude returned, and she resolved to try for some chance of escape. In this faint hope she examined every part of her prison, and perceived a tremulous motion in some of the stones that seemed to compose the wall. "Surely," thought Sally "if there be any passage hence, it cannot be known to the present inhabitants or I should not be left here. I cannot be worse off, so come what may of it, I will try the chance for my life." Again she felt the wall—a stone fell: she removed more with as little noise as possible, and after much labour succeeded in enlarging the aperture sufficiently to admit her, she pushed through, and guided by the rays from the lamp she carried, proceeded along a winding passage of considerable extent, and reached the end; here she was impeded by another door-way, built up as the former; she laboured hard, and had just removed sufficient to permit her to get through it, when a horrid shout resounded through the windings of the cave; urged by despair, she forced through and found herself in the open air. It was now nearly dark, and she ran at hazard, stumbling against the rocks and over the underwood; at last she was stunned by striking against the trunk of a large tree—hardly recovered from the blow, she looked back, and fancied she saw light gleaming at some distance. This roused her completely—she doubted not that it was from the gang in pursuit. She climbed the tree, and placed herself amongst the highest branches; she had hardly effected this when the light approached more rapidly, and she discerned the party in pursuit carrying lanterns and carefully exploring the underwood.

* In part of the North *dear* is used in anger—the *de-el* fly away with you, *dear*, is usual,

they came sufficiently near to hear what was said, curses and execrations were liberally bestowed both on herself and those who had confined her in that apartment. She distinguished the voice of Jones, exclaiming, as they passed in consultation under the tree—

"I wash my hands of it, Mother Beldrum. I knabbed her—I brought her here, and gave her to those cursed jades that could not keep the bird in the hand—so Judy don't be bothering me—we may catch her yet, woman—she can't be gone far."

Judy broke into furious reproaches against the other women, who returned her abuse, by saying she deserved it all for being so close, and not letting them into all the ins and outs of the cave. The vocal storm raged more and more fiercely, and from words they proceeded to "deeds of arms." Jones now interposed his authority, and commanded peace, reminding the fair combatants that they were losing time, and that they had better disperse and continue their search, that Sally must be near at hand.

"But what good is in that," said Mother Beldrum, in her sharp, shrill tones, "if she were even under our feet: there are twenty holes she could hide in, and we never the wiser—so we lost pretty Peggy."

"Aye," said another, "but if we did, she could run like a deer, and had light to run too."

"Beware," said Jones, in an elevated tone, "how you provoke me by referring to by-gones. Search away, for as the dawn comes on we have no business here. To-morrow is the fair of A——, and the cattle will soon pass. Hush! I hear a noise—could they be coming already?"

"What is worse," said Judy, "the sky is getting some-ways reddish—look here, and there, and everywhere for her."

"Shall we blow out the lights?" asked one of the party—"the light shows far."

"Tush! you fool," said Jones, "are we not near the fairy mount—they will think the fairies are dancing if they see the lights, and won't like to interrupt them. I only fear the cattle—they will push on right a head, and the drovers must follow."

Shortly afterwards Sally heard a distant bellowing—it soon afterwards struck Jones."

"Aye," said the robber, "it is as I said—here are the drovers. Quick, quick—search those bushes and this dry dyke, and then back with us, and there's an end to it."

The search continued till the noise of the cattle became so distinct that the gang feared detection, and, cursing their bad luck, they went off.

Sally still remained in the tree, in violent agitation, dreading their return; but these painful moments were soon ended. The dawn rapidly advanced, so as to enable Sally to distinguish objects, and, to her great comfort, she recognised amongst the foremost drovers a cousin, to whom she imparted her situation, and placed herself under his care. He restored her to Mr. Stewart that evening, who rewarded her by marriage for her sufferings in his cause. The gang of freebooters quitted their retreat, and, though it was explored, they left no clue by which they could be traced.

In childhood I have often wandered over the scene of the above tale, and was shown the wreck of the fine tree that had sheltered Sally Mac Donald.

HIBERNICUS.

AN ANECDOTE.

The celebrated Bentley, when in France, went to visit the Countess of Ferrers, then on a party of pleasure at Paris. He found with her so large a party that he was quite embarrassed how to behave, what to say, or what countenance to show. Soon tired of this painful situation, which he much felt, he retired as awkwardly as he entered. So soon as he was gone, Lady Ferrers was asked, who that man was they all thought so ridiculous, and on whom every one had something to say and to remark. "He is so learned a man," replied Lady Ferrers, "that he can tell you in Greek and Hebrew what a chair is, but does not know how to sit on one."

SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

A young lady, newly married, being obliged to show her husband all the letters she wrote, sent the following to an intimate friend:

"I cannot be satisfied, my Dearest Friend! blest as I am in the matrimonial state, unless I pour into your friendly bosom which has ever beat in unison with mine, the various sentiments which swell with the liveliest emotions of pleasure, my almost bursting heart. I tell you my dear husband is the most amiable of men. I have now been married seven weeks, and have never found the least reason to repent the day that joined us. My husband is both in person and manners far from resembling ugly, cross, old, disagreeable, and jealous monsters, who think by confining to secure; a wife it is his maxim to treat as a bosom friend, - - - - - and not as a play-thing, or menial slave, the woman of his choice - - - - - Neither party, he says, should always obey implicitly, but each yield to the other by turns. An ancient maiden aunt, near seventy, a cheerful, venerable, and pleasant old lady lives in the house with us—she is the delight of both young and old; she is civil to all the neighbourhood round, generous and charitable to the poor. I am convinced my husband likes nothing more than he does me; he flatters me more than the glass, and his intoxication, (for so I must call the excess of his love), often makes me blush for the unworthiness of its object, and wish I could be more deserving of the man whose name I bear. To say all in one word - - - - - and to crown the whole, - - - - - my former lover is now my indulgent husband, my fondness is returned, and I might have had a Prince without the felicity I find in him. Adieu! may you be as blest as I am unable to wish that I could be more happy!"

N. B.—The key to the above letter (in ciphers) is to read the first, and then every alternate line only.

SINGULAR INSTANCE OF BENEFICENCE.

An inhabitant of a burgh of the circle of Ertysburgh, a mountainous country, more liable to a scarcity of provisions than other cantons of the electorate of Saxony, found himself, after supporting his family on a small provision of oats, reduced to the utmost misery, by a baker's refusing to supply him with bread, unless he was paid nine crowns that he owed him. The wretch, thus brought to a state of despair, repaired to a neighbouring wood, where he stopt a pedlar, who, without defending himself, delivered his purse that contained twenty-one crowns; the robber would not keep more than his necessities required, and returned the remainder, beseeching the traveller to come with him to his habitation, to be a witness of the cause that urged him to robbery, which might, perhaps, plead his pardon. The pedlar complied, entered the hut, and found there the peasant's wife and children in a deplorable situation; struck with compassion, he insisted on giving them all his money, and only regretted that he had not sufficient to leave them to prevent future want.

DUBLIN:

Printed and Published by P. D. HARDY, 3, Cecilia Street; to whom all communications are to be addressed.

Sold by all Booksellers in Ireland.

In London, by Richard Groombridge, 6, Panyer-alley, Paternoster-row; in Liverpool, by Willmer and Smith; in Manchester, by Ambury; in Birmingham, by Drake; in Glasgow, by W. & M. Phun, and in Edinburgh by N. Bowack.